



WE cannot control the evil tongues of others, but a good life enables us to despise them.—Cato.

The Best Laid Schemes

(New England Homestead)

(Concluded from last week)

"CLANG! CLANG!" The voice of the old knocker resounded valiantly all through the still house. The guilty pair actually jumped. "Do you suppose it's another?" whispered Ma.

"Eh! It is, the ghost is in fine fettle to-night—listen!" Pa tiptoed to the attic door, and opened it a crack. The sound that tore down the stairway almost made the old reprobate himself flinch. Ma really did edge away and when Pa went to the door in response to a second impetuous summons of the knocker, she accompanied him.

A tall, fine looking man stood smiling on the step. His motor car, with a lady therein, stood at the gate. "This place is still for sale, Mr. Turpy? It appears to be exactly what I want. I heard about it first from your son, with whom I recently had some dealings."

The venerable plotters paled. Was their well-laid scheme to fail, after all? It was a serious-faced old couple that led the way into the sitting room. The stranger at once proceeded to talk business. Money was no object.

"Conscience don't make worries of us all!" The hitherto successful and fearless conspirator, draped not marsh forth malaria, tramps, rattling of ghost before this mysterious stranger who knew John, and had talked with him since the "Fur Sale" sign was hoisted. They felt their nerveless fingers slipping from the dear old house, the precious orchards and garden, the well loved fields and woods. The rising east wind soured drearily through the willows. Never before had it sounded so solemn, so hopeless. Suddenly a gust swept through the window, and with it the attic door burst open. Down the stairway swept a shriek, bewilderment, the banshee's wail would have sounded like a sick kitten. The foiled plotters looked up with dull and apathetic eyes, but the stranger—was the man crazy? He leaped back against the patchwork tidy and burst into a ringing peal of laughter. Pa and Ma clasped hands and stared at him apprehensively. Were they responsible for something, the reason of a fellow-being? Horrified, the man rocked back and forth, laughing more and more irrepressibly. And, presently, something in the blue eyes, was it a gleam of boyish mischief?—stole the worm from the two pairs of eyes that watched him. First Pa, and then Ma joined in the laugh, not even dimly guessing why, but with a feeling that somehow, all was well. Presently all three straightened their faces, and wiped their eyes. Then the stranger did the amazing thing—he jumped from the chair, seized Pa's horny hand in a warm grip, and flung a muscular arm about Ma's substantial waist.

"Guess who it is! Guess who it is!" He shouted joyfully.

Ma, still suffering his arm to remain, gave him one brief look, and spoke with conviction: "Tad Jimson!" "That's who, Ma! Glad to see me? Eh? Glad to see your good-for-nothing? Bless your dear heart! Sit down, and let me tell you." Pa and Ma sank down together on the calico-covered settle, looking and feeling a bit dazed.

"You see, after I hooked Jack and left that onion bed—(remember it,

their scheme to outwit well-meaning John and Juliet.

"Well, Pa and Ma, they'll never hear of it from us (the guilty pair looked inexpressibly relieved, and say, we have the best scheme yet—Belle and I. We hatched it and polished it off as we came along to-night—Belle caught on to your chicanery!" We'll buy the place, and you two can have as much of the dear old ark as you want, and we'll take the rest.

And when we go for the winter, I'll suit yourselves and her husband to keep you company. So John and Juliet will have their hearts set at rest, and all will go merrily as the marriage bell. You can run the farm to suit yourselves and furnish us cream and cabbages and stuff at cut throat prices—and we'll live happy ever after. Eh, Pa and Ma?" Ma smiled through tears that made the flame of the little old lamp look to her like the aurora borealis.

Pa blew his nose sonorously. "You little scapegrace!" he quavered. Then turning to Ma: "Mehitable Turpy, did ever two high-diving old scallawags ever get let down so easy before!"

Of Age and Ten

"This isn't Sunday. What are you dressed up for?" demanded the father



Neat and Attractive, a Model of Its Kind

A home doesn't need to be large to be handsome. The home of Jas. Terrie, Dufferin Co., Ont., here illustrated, is a proof of this. Notice the effect of lawn and shrubbery in rendering this attractive home more attractive.

Ma! I had the luck that—well the kind I deserved, for some years. Then I struck it rich in Alaska—then I struck it richer still in California, where the finest girl in the world made the mistake of her life in falling in love with me and marrying me. She has been pruning and training and educating me for the last five years, and her patience and enthusiasm are still constantly on tap—bless her!" "I told her about you, and soon as they fell out so that we could, we came east to look you up. Ran across John in New York, and learned that you had put the old place up for sale. Struck me that it would be a mighty nice place for a summer home for Belle and me and the kiddies; and besides, I was mighty glad to be able to offer you a gilt-edged price. Well, Belle and I came on down. Fell into conversation with folks along the road and learned about your malaria and rattlers and tramps and the ghost! I identified the ghost at once, but jimmie crickets, Pa, it took Belle to catch on to the reasons why you and Ma were working it too! And those other incumbrances, now! Hurt your feelings to stay a while longer on the old place—eh, Ma? Guess I will go out and bring in Belle."

With a parting pinch on Ma's cheek which had assumed its wonted pinch, the returned prodigal strode out, to return immediately with a gracious beauty, who hugged and kissed both Pa and Ma impartially, in warm-hearted western style, which so opened their hearts that they fairly poured forth the tale of their united perfidy—

when his boy came down without his work clothes on.

"I'm going to the city on the next train," calmly replied the son. "No, ye ain't. Git into yer overalls and go milk the cows," demanded the irate father.

"I'm of age to-day. You're bossed me for the last time and I leave for a more congenial place."

The parents were struck dumb with the suddenness of the declaration.

"My boy going to leave me?" thought the stricken mother.

"Brother going to the city—and my life will be harder!" thought the younger brother.

"I'm going to leave right at the beginning of harvest!" muttered the angry father to himself. "If ye go ye'll walk to the station. I can't spare the team to-day," he said.

"Of age—and leaving home. Why? He never had been treated as a son should have been. He was not dealt with honestly and squarely by his father."

He never had been given a dollar resulting from the sale of "his calves and pigs."

He never was consulted in matters pertaining to farm management.

Not receiving the consideration accorded the hired man, and not receiving any compensating cash or favors, Joe had lived with only one ambition in his secret heart—to

Get away as soon as of age.

That day had come and he was going.

While mother was preparing the breakfast he wandered about, giving

the last affectionate pat to all the barnyard stock.

Dick, the old family horse, put his soft nose against Joe's cheek, and seemed to say, "I'm sorry you're going."

There by the well stood the big willow where as a boy he had "skinned the cat's" in his overhauling limo—he had known happy days.

And the tears came to the determined eyes at the recollection that now flooded his memory.

Mother knew—mother understood why he would not stay.

She'd give her life if she could bring father and son into a more friendly relationship—but father was austere.

She sobbed as though she were bidding a final farewell to a boy going to war—nor had she even a trace of the patriotic spirit of sacrifice to comfort her.

The hired man batted his eyes to keep back the tears—for he understood.

The brothers and sisters crept away with heavy hearts. The father felt a strange lump in his throat—but he would never acknowledge that he possessed any sentiment.

It was sad, it was sad, and might have been different had that fine young man been made to feel a personal interest in the farm.

When your boy is of age will he want to stay, or will he go?

Will he go because you have never given him a square deal—never shown your love for him, never made home attractive enough to counteract the influence of the city?—Westers Farmer.

"Thou Shalt not"—Worry

We have no conscience on the matter of worry; we do not think of it as wrong; we never consider it even as a failing, much less ask forgiveness of it as a sin. If the preacher were to say "Do not fear!" or "Do not kill!" we accept the word at once as a Divine authority. But if the preacher should say "Do not worry" there springs up instantly a sense of resentment. Everybody knows the kind of feeling that this causes.

"Ah! It is all very well for you to talk," as if the authority were that of the preacher only, and not of the Master Himself. Who is not familiar with the angry mutter: "Let anybody live where I live, and put up with the things that I have got to endure!" That settles the matter in the opinion of a great many. But mark from Whom this word comes: "I say unto you"—with Him the matter must be settled, the Lord and Judge of all men.—Mark Gay Pearse.

Cocoanut matting may be cleaned with a large coarse cloth dipped in salt and water and then rubbed dry.

When patching wall paper don't forget to pretreat operations by putting the new piece of paper in its sunshine to fade till it matches that on the wall. Don't cut the patch a neat square, but tear it. The irregularity of its edges will make it less conspicuous.

To improve oilcloth dissolve a pound of blue in a quart of water over a fire, then rub it lightly over the oilcloth with a piece of flannel, and leave it to dry. If possible, do this in the evening so that the oilcloth may be walked on until the morning. This treatment adds to the durability of the oilcloth, besides greatly improving its appearance.

I like your paper very much, and the sewing room is very helpful.—Mn J. A. MacCauley, Port Milford, Ont.